

THREE TYPES OF TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY AFTER THE COLD WAR ON THE MIDDLE EAST

SOĞUK SAVAŞ SONRASI TÜRKİYE'NİN ORTADOĞUDAKİ ÜÇ TARZ DIŞ POLİTİKASI

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ABSTRACT

This article tries to reveal Turkey's Middle East policy that is after the cold war till today, into three different time periods, by examining in terms of Israel, Iran, Iraq and Syria policies. Due to unstable condition of international arena, different kinds of foreign politics' perception has been produced by Turkey in terms of Middle East and this caused changed of balance in the region.

ÖZET

Bu çalışma Türkiye'nin Soğuk Savaş sonrasında günümüze kadar olan Ortadoğu politikasını İsrail, İran, Irak, ve Suriye politikaları açısından inceleyerek üç ayrı zaman dilimi içinde ele almaktadır. Her dönemde uluslararası konjekturun değişkenlik arzemesi farklı bir dış politika algısı üretilmiş ve bu politikaların yansımalarının sonuçları bölgede dengelerin değişmesine sebebiyet vermiştir.

Keywords: Turkish Foreign Policy, Middle East, After Cold War

Anahtar Kelimeler: Türk Dış Politikası, Orta Doğu, Soğuk Savaş Sonrası

1. INTRODUCTION

Middle East has been indicated as the cradle of the important civilizations by hosting several cultures and also it always constitutes an important place in the world conjuncture. Even though there are different points of view about the boundaries of the Middle East, in a widest sense, the region which lies from the Bosphorous of İstanbul to the eastern coasts of India is named as "Middle East" (Karaaslan, 1998: 37), in general Middle East has been defined as a continent including Turkey, Egypt, Arabian Peninsula, Gulf Region, Iran and Iraq.

It is possible to divide Turkey's Middle East policy of post-cold war into three periods; the years between 1990- 2000, the period from 2000 to Arabic Spring and later years. There are important differences between the

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Cold War, the post-Cold War, and after Arab Spring period in the Middle East policy of Turkey. Particularly after the Arabic Spring, the condition of foreign policy of Middle East totally changed. Turkey which followed the policy of turning its back by burning all the political, strategical and cultural bridges of the Middle East before the Cold War period, was not able to use its advantage of being dominant for long years within the sharing process of the natural resources by determining whole global relations of the region. During the Cold War period, traditional apathy and careful stance have been dominant in Turkey's relations with the region. After the end of the Cold War, a new attitude was set out in which the multilateral benefits and relations gained importance in terms of the economy, external policy and security policy. In these multilateral relations, the atmosphere of uncertainty that the post-Cold War period created, has started to give the benefits of the countries' prominence. After the Arabic Spring the condition of foreign policy of Middle East totally changed due to regional and global balance shifting.

In the period of 1990-2000, contributing to the general lines of Turkey's foreign policy and to the Middle East peace process, it was seen as that Turkey focused on resolving the Kurdish problem. As of the 2000's Turkey has understood that it cannot be a spectator to the developments in its region. Turkey, which recognized its potential, has required its aim first being a regional rather than being a global power by reshaping its potential. The normalization process with Armenia, cooperating with the Northern Iraq authorities against the PKK which is a potential threat for its integrity, and abolishing the visa procedures with many countries including the Middle East, are the concrete examples of this process.

Turkey's interest and influence over the Middle East region has changed its dimensions and expanded in recent years. Turkey aims to make the Middle East as one of the dominant policy areas in external relations which the multilateralism will dominate gradually. In the globalization process, Turkey has understood that it cannot be a spectator to the developments in its region anymore. Turkey, realizing its potential, has acquired a vision to itself in foreign policy.

Arab Spring created huge shocks in parameters of the discussion about the idea of New Ottomanism in Turkey's foreign policy towards Middle East and the displaying of Zero Problem with Neighborhood principles. The region turned into a field of war. Turkey turns out to be in a situation of conflict with Syria, Iran, Israel, and Iraq. With Arab spring, the foreign policy broadens its pitch of political impact in Turkish Foreign Policy (TFP) in general and regional policy in private. This expanding domain of influence generates some of the problems. Particularly with Arab spring, adversity in front of TFP occurs in trying stabilization of its benefits with the principled foreign policy that supports democratic transformation in those countries. In this context, supporting an amicable and controlled transformation in Middle East is seen as a best option for Turkey.

It is hard to explain the reason behind TFP change by single dynamic. That is combination of multiple variables such as various foreign policies of Turkey which is strongly dependent on government's point of view, and new World order that cause to change.

2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1. The Years Between 1990-2000

In the 1990's, the years in which America was perceived as the only external actor effective in the Middle East, has given its place to a new period in which there were many more actors having voice in the region. Washington's efforts about perpetuating the monopole international political structure have been unsuccessful. (Waltz, 2000: 36) In the years of 1990-2000, which constitutes the first ten years after the Cold War, when Iraq's occupying Kuwait and the Gulf War were the first important events of these years and Middle East has been one of the leading regions, has been a period of time in which the old habitudes in international relations has been marginalized and predictability has become difficult. In the new period, the regional problems has come to the forefront more specifically than the global problems.

On the other side Turkey had much more rough time than the past ten years with its Middle Eastern neighbors, Syria, Iran and Iraq. Turkish policy makers have been much more occupied with the problems emanating from Iran, Iraq, Syria, and the PKK. The centerpiece of the policy was to preserve territorial integrity against the Kurdish questions. (Uslu, 2006:16) It has been a period that in which problems aroused rather than cooperation with the neighbors of Turkey. However, it was observed that Turkey's cooperation with Israel has been expanded with inversely proportional of its relations with its neighbors. Especially in a period when the tension with Syria has started to increase the relations were upgraded by signing the military and economic cooperation conventions with Israel.

Throughout the 1990's the main elements that determined Turkey's Middle East relations have been security and water problems. Because of the PKK terrorism Ankara maintained security based on relations with the neighboring countries. Thus, the connections with the Arab and Islamic World have continued in a problematical way. The only exception has been Israel. Especially PKK based on tensions raised up to the verge of war between Turkey and Syria and it has negatively affected Turkey's approach towards the Middle east and accordingly to the Arab World. As of the nineties USA which became more influential in the region has been a guiding factor for Turkey's Middle East policies though not a shaping factor. In the same period, Turkey's rising strategic interest -sharing with Israel- has revealed the non-declared tension between Turkish – Arab relations. Over the 1990's Turkey, with various reasons, has increased its cooperation with the only non-Muslim state in the Middle East. Neighbor Iraq has caused a

security problem for Turkey because both Saddam Hussein and the density of Kurt in northern region that were not able to be control.

The period which started with the arrestment of Ocalan has paved the way for Turkey to improve its relations both with Syria and Iraq. The common fear against the foundation of a Kurdish state in Iraq, particularly in Northern Iraq, Damascus and Tehran has caused to stop their policies supporting PKK.

For a decade, Turkey has passed a time which problems and conflicts dominated the cooperation and common interests with Turkey's three neighbors; Iran, Iraq and Syria. Since these problematic areas have a link with Turkey's domestic problems it has made it difficult by complicating the solutions. As a result, within these years when Turkey was drafted into political and economic instability in its domestic policy, its ability to produce policies apart from the problematic areas to the region has been remained limited.

2.2. The Period After 2000

Particularly until the 2000's, Turkey couldn't strengthen enough its relations with the Middle East countries and ignored its cultural, religion and historical unity with the region. The relations between Turkey which is repositioned according to the conjuncture and Arabic World which is again subjected to the conjectural waves within the global and regional system, that is redefined and sometimes reconstructed in the 2000's, are now changed and particularly after the US occupation to Iraq in 2003 and the events afterwards have reshaped the issue with the updated regional problems.

In 2000s , change of a power happened in the recent history of Turkey that turned out a significant political, economic, social, cultural, and socio-psychological consequences and as a candidate party having a potential vote from an ignored right-center till 2002 November Election, Justice and Development Party (JDP), known with the conservative and the democratic attributes, came to power alone. Reflection of the transformation that happened in domestic policy with JDP became inevitable in foreign policy as well. Government party that is conservative in respect of Islamic base and a pro-civilization referring to the order of military guardianship espoused an identity-axis politics in foreign policy. Party, setting out its strategic atlas with the appointment of Ahmet Davutoğlu as a counselor, began to acquire eligibility, by being in the wake of geopolitics entailments and building political statements about these entailments. The policies that JDP followed and the changing cyclical situations in the world had an important role in the alteration after 2000's in the external policy of Turkey. The party has started to implement the "close relations with no problem" policy which would continue until Arabic Spring. (Çağaptay, 2007: 1) When Erdogan became the prime minister in March 2003, as a result of the overwhelming victory of his party in November 2002 elections, he assumed an activist prime-ministerial role in TFP. The high profile visits made among

Ankara-Damascus and Tehran were indicators which showed the effectiveness of Turkey in the Middle East.

As of 2003 it has been seen that important fluctuations are being experienced in the Middle East policy and Turkey's relationships. The reasons for this was the turn of the scales with the USA's military action against Iraq and the troubles experienced in the Turkey –USA relations. During the period starting with Turkey's denial of the resolution in the Grand National Assembly of Turkey and the starting date of USA's Iraq action in March 2003 until the date of September 2007 the fluctuations and troubles continued within this period. But in this period Turkey, for its own benefit, has continued its extensive diplomacy aims both in the regional countries and the USA. It started to obtain the important results of these efforts as of the last periods of the year 2007. Accordingly, it is seen that Turkey has entered a new period in which its importance in the Middle East region gradually increased. The increasing importance of Turkey in the Middle East region has been perceived in the important problematic fields of the region, notably the Iraq problem. As already implied, AKP government gives reciprocal responses to its policies that has leveled up the relations and it takes steps to strengthened the other party's relations even gradually improving mentioned policies. Particularly the sensational speeches appealing to the "Arabic conscience", the romantic initiatives; again taking political steps with conqueror hearts of the Arabia, especially the random public has accelerated the process substantially. The "March 1 resolution" was not accepted by the Grand National Assembly of Turkey and this was enough to destroy the "Western sympathizer Turkey" image on a large scale.

Together with the changing conjuncture after September 11 attacks, Turkey has launched a new policy orientation. This change has become more apparent with the AK Party government from 2002 to the appointment of Ahmet Davutoğlu as Minister of Foreign Affairs in 2009. Defining a foreign policy that is proactive, progressive and intended for international relations, Davutoğlu advocates that soft power is Turkey's main source. Turkey will also rise into a country that realizes the geopolitical, geo-cultural and geo-economic integration provided that she forms a unity between her history and geographical depth.

Turkey had been in the process of being an influential actor in her region by making changes in her recent diplomacy approach before 2010. In this point, AK Party government underlines that this new foreign policy approach does not mean the total break up from the Western alliance. AK Party advocates that they try to develop a new international relations approach for Turkey by accentuating the East policy as well as West policy. Some experts mention that the development of Ankara's alignment vision with neighboring countries is a natural result of the international relations.

2.3. After The Arabic Spring

In fact, the approach of zero problems with neighbors was one of the most important tools of Turkey's foreign policy which is in search of

autonomy. The policy of zero problem aims as minimum problem as possible with its neighbors and close geographic and to transform the region to a region of confidence and stability. However in the region, failure of zero problem policy with neighbors is politically seen as normal when such a transformation occurs, particularly due to experiences in Syria and attitude of Esedd's governance. Even if Turkey experienced such a political period, Turkey's foreign policy didn't give up principles of zero problem diplomatically and economically, during the process of Arab spring.

Together with all these developments affecting policy of zero problem with neighbors, Turkey maintains its weights in the Middle East and power of diplomacy and at the same time supports the process of democratic transitions happened in regional countries. In any case, for the implementation of accurate diagnosis and treatment, it is needed to be considered that the desire of raising bilateral relations to a high-level collaboration in respect of policy of zero problems with neighbors is a correct target. (Duran, 2012)

In spite of everything, it is not possible to apply the policy of zero problems with neighbors. With a big influence of these problems that principle of zero problem with neighbors came across, it is also needed a new conceptualization against Turkey's foreign policy towards the region. The normative concept of popular leadership generated for this need (Duran, 2012), stands out as a description aiming to attain regional people rather than regional governments. In this context, the TFP mentions the trust gained at people in Middle East and the acceptance, as a national interest of international environment.

Turkish Foreign Policy, in the face of developments in other countries, is waiting primarily for activation of dominant power elements and showing reaction. From this perspective, as human rights and democratization are main factors in the critical discourse of the Western countries, it caused Turkey to shift gradually in this position as well. At this stage, both the problem of timing and problem of normative stance are obvious. Turkey waited for others in terms of timing so that couldn't get initiative independently and also kept the accounts of the cost of having normative position. Normative position, at the same time, symbolizes the purpose of getting maximum benefit from the status that is to be a huge expectation for re-establishment.

Consequently, Turkey has inclination of implementing its multi-dimensional foreign policy that is also called as axis shift. One of the assertions of TFP, the principle of zero problems with neighbors should be reviewed through reckoning the process of Arabic Spring. Westermism, one of the principles of main movement, is still a basic determinant for TFP. Hosting for Missile Defense System that became a common issue in terms of NATO recently, is not alone enough to give explanation. In general, the policy in Middle East and in particular, rhetoric that is used during Arab Spring, no doubt is a work of national interest-oriented vision. Turkey will be stunted without this context. In this perspective, it is obvious that Turkish

Policy's basic orientation was not harmed. Recently, there has been a shifting condition in the Middle East. Turkey needs to establish new relations in order to balance its condition. Above all tension in the region makes Turkish-Western partnership essential. This is the mutual interest for both sides. Turkey, for its part, will require active support from its NATO allies in addressing threats stemming from Syria and, potentially, from Iran. In order to cope with strong position in the area, Turkey has made use of different soft power instrument with a target to bring constancy and make the region more reliant. Constituted strong relations with Middle East will provide serious contributions to its allies. A truly strategic bond between Turkey and the West is no longer optional.

3. TURKEY-SYRIA RELATIONS

The problems which shaped the relation between Turkey and Syria had been the Hatay problem which has a historical depth, the water problem which took its shape especially after the Southeastern Anatolia Project and has been a reason of tension and security problem that caused by PKK getting support of Syria, which occurred in last 20 years of 20th century, and development of relations between Israel and Turkey. (Aras, 2005) The problem between Turkey and Syria showed parallelism with PKK problem. However Syria did not follow parallel politics with Turkey and used PKK issue and water problem as a trump. Upon this behavior, the explanation of commander of land forces saying, if this behavior continues, they would do what is necessary, caused tension between Syria and Turkey.

Turkey's official policy against Syria can be defined as deliberate distancing and controlled tension. (Aras, 2005) The general idea in Ankara was Syria used PKK as a trump in order to get more water. Under this circumstance, Turkish authorities expressed that it is impossible for Syria to get more water from Turkey. In spite of this, Syria has brought the water problem to agenda, pushed Turkey in international area, and continued the support to PKK.

Syria, which acted in a manner of irreconcilable about water problem, has begun PKK to hinder the southeastern Anatolia project of Turkey. Turkey warned Syria not to support PKK so many times but Syria did not respond as expected. In that time PKK caused a big damage in Turkey. Syria cooperated with Iraq, Iran and Greece on supporting terror.

In 1994-1995 both sides tried to develop the trade between each other but could not succeed because of water problem and PKK. (Olson, 1995: 4) In contrast to relations between Syria, relations with Israel that showed a significant improvement, has reached a peak with signing agreement on military and economic cooperation, in 1996. From Turkey's point of view, basic motivation in signing the agreements is to put pressure on Syria. Two countries' warming up on military relations could affect Syria which had important problems with Israel, in a mandatory way. It is hard to guess the part of this effect. The government of Damascus got Abdullah

Ocalan out of the country on October 1997 and made a commitment of not supporting PKK. After Adana consensus, it has been seen that the relations began to soften and improved positively. Although it has not reached a solution on water problem, improvement of relations in a positive way, showed that the most important reason of the tension between two countries was the support of Syria on PKK. After resolution of PKK problem with Syria, the relations with Israel have lost its density. In this circumstances it is possible to say the struggle of PKK came to fore in relations with Israel.

After Adana consensus, the period of softening the relations between Turkey and Syria has begun. In that period it has been seen that the support to PKK had stopped. Getting Abdullah Ocalan out of the country and taking him to Turkey after he got arrested in Kenia showed that two countries shared information. At the time of Bashar al-Assad who got the power after the death of Hafiz Assad, the relations between two countries showed that the problems from the past began to be forgotten. There have been many improvements in relations between Turkey and Syria. Two countries signed agreement about various issues and postponed visa. Strategical cooperation council was established between two countries. In the new era, there have been mutual visits; the opportunity was well taken with Bashar al-Assad gaining power. It has been decided to improve mutual relations with improvement of border trade, broadening the trade volume, helping each other in cultural and social issues.

After 2000, more specifically after the elections of 3 November 2002, Turkey carried out a foreign policy based on active and flexible diplomacy that improves the ability of movement in global and local system, to increase local and global activity. (Atlioglu, 2005:1) The relations between two countries began to become commonplace. The most important indication of change in behavior is intense diplomacy and mutual visits with variety and high frequency as we have never seen before. To gain positive results from this approach, or to express the purpose more appropriately, the first thing to be done is to decrease the problems in a minimum level and create strong alliance and cultural, economic and political relations based on trust and cooperation. (Atlioglu, 2005:1)

In declaration of elections before general elections on 22 July 2007, it has seen that JDP gave more importance to Syria in the Middle East. In the framework of “zero problem with neighbors” AKP expressed the importance of relations with Syria and Iran and also with the states there has been close relations with Iran, Iraq and Syria in the framework of “creating a security network”. With this purpose, “frequent contact” method was embraced. Economic relations with Syria, Iraq and Iran, “Free Trade Agreement” signed with Syria and integrity process of Halep and Gaziantep is being represented as consequences of this confidence relation. (Anonim, 2007:29)

Syria takes Turkey as a model in becoming democratic and thinks positively about contribution of this pattern. (Orhan, 2005:65) Thanks top seizing actions in Syria, decreasing tension about sharing the water of Firat and Dicle, and losing importance on Hatay issue, in 2009, two countries

signed an important agreement, especially cancelling the visa of citizens of the two countries for travelling until Arabic Spring the relations between two countries were in a positive period.

In 2011, with the deepening crisis of Syria, campaigns of regional distribution of power also went up with a statement based on polarization of denomination. Syria became one of the main areas of struggle for new geopolitical rivalry as exterritorial powers are also became follower of this campaign. In this case, Turkey displayed a performance that is far from being decisive actor in spite of all advantages that geography provides to itself. Moreover, like Iran and Russia with which it had close relations in previous period, its relation with two neighbors which are follower in Syria incidents also became strained. The realities of new era and multi-player campaign of regional power will mean primarily narrowing the required space for implementation of autonomous policy in terms of Turkey.

The Syria crisis has put Turkey's the most important idea of foreign policy "zero problems with neighbors" principle to the test. Turkey's attitude on Syria has changed over the time. In Syria incidents, Turkey moved as fast as possible. In the beginning, Turkey advising Assad regime to heed the demands of public, gradually harden its statement. The most fundamental reason of this hardening is the level of violence that Assad's regime performing on dissidents. Turkey deliberately changed its policy of engagement. When considering the quality of public movement in Tunisia that started Arab spring, Turkey reckoning incidents in Syria come to an end similar to other countries with impact of domino in Arabian world, had a pioneer and rigorous role towards Assad regime. In this regard, Assad's management admonished Turkey not to interfere in incidents in Syria.

An embattled Syrian regime, even more dependent on its alliance with Iran, together with the prospect of growing Iranian influence in Iraq, reinforces the potential for a strategic competition along sectarian lines. (Lesser, 2013:261)

The principle of TFP that is to be interrogated especially with the developments in Syria is the status quo. As it is presented in the respective section, status quo lost its firmness excessively and even torn, metaphorically speaking. Turkey's efforts to transform the regime in Syria diminished its approach for not interfering internal affairs of nations. Turkey acquired universalized in terms of defending fundamental values, it moved with regard to this ethic pillar when criticizing Syrian regime.

According to Davutoglu, in Syria, progress toward the elimination of Bashar al-Assad's chemical weapons is a step in the right direction, but there is still more to be done. Turkey is going to support to extent the Syrian people until a political transition is achieved and the rule of cruel despotism comes to an end. (Davutoglu, 2013) Turkey is absolutely against to Syria regime. Turkey wants a particular "end result" that does not include Assad. As most spectators recognize, considering the US unwillingness to become embroiled in a new Middle Eastern issue, there are two likely scenarios: a

long and extremely bloody war of attrition that will end when one of the parties finally bleeds white, or a diplomatic compromise where the opposition and the Assad regime directly negotiates under the supervision of the US and Russia. (Kadercan, 2013) Most probably the second senerio is more likely.Because of US and Russia negotiation. Syria crisis may determine its future position in the region.

4. TURKEY- ISRAEL RELATIONS

The elites of the Republic of Turkey did not see the founding of Israel State as the priorities were to establish and enhance security within Misak-I Milli borders. The Turkey-Israel relations started in 1949 when Turkey recognized the independence of Israel. It is obvious to say that the recognition by Turkey was due to the expectation of being in the same team with US and NATO powers against Russia. United States of America was supporting the membership of Turkey and Israel to the international organizations founded in the west against the global threats spread from the USSR and caused Turkey and Israel to be natural regional partners in the process. (Davutoglu, 2001:148) After Turkey recognized Israel, almost in every cold war period its coldness with the Arabia continued. The clearest sign of this was that Turkey couldn't find enough support from the Arabian countries in the Cyprus and the Syria issue.

The most attractive development at the Turkish – Israel relations was experienced after the cold war period. In terms of safety, after the collapse of the Soviet Union Turkey turned its attention from north to south and to the new forming caused the attention to turn to countries like Iran, Iraq and Syria made Turkey to build a friendship with Israel. Turkey upgraded its diplomatic relations with Israel, and as well as with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) which is an organization created in 1964 with the aim of funding an independent State of Palestine, to ambassadorial level. (Altunışık, 2000:175) Israel has stated the military alliance of Turkey and Israel changed the power balances in the region. (Demirer, Demirer, and Orhangazi, 1998:24)

Some observers go further and describe the partnership between Israel and Turkey as the Turkey-Israel and the American Jewish Alliance. (Olson, 2005:29)A big development was recorded in the relation between Turkey and Israel in the 1990's. Israel's giving importance to its relation with Turkey in terms the Middle Eastern balance was one of the items to support this development. In 1990's, both countries put their relations in the level of embassy for the first time. High level visits watched one another. Besides, a big development was recorded in economic and a commercial relation, more detailed cooperation was held in military field was recorded.

As of the second half of the 1990's the Turkey- Israel relations started to record definite developments. In 1993 "The Declaration of Palestine Autonym Principles" was signed between Israel and PLO helped Turkey to get closer with the Arab countries without giving any harm to its

relations. (Hale, 2003:318) Putting the diplomatic relations with Israel into order, determines the movement of the relations with the region and common interest lie under this cooperation. The 1993 Oslo Peace Process has reached an important movement in Turkey in terms of getting closer with Israel. When cooperating in bilateral relations, especially in military, an improvement of the relation between two countries were observed in bilateral agreements and common operations.

The signing of the Israel-PLO Declaration of Principles on 13 September 1993 turned the page to a new era of Israeli-Turkish relations. Israel's recognition of the PLO-and the PLO's of Israel- meant that Ankara no longer had to restrain its ties with Jerusalem in order to impress the Arab world. A series of firsts then ensued: Çetin's visit to Israel in November. (Robinson, 1991:250) Israeli President Ezer Weizman's visit to Turkey in January 1994; Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Perez's visit to Turkey in April 1994; and Turkish Prime Minister Tansu Çiller's visit to Israel in November 1994. (Makovsky, 1996:161) Both countries relationship with each other is very close and they increase this partnership with making new agreement in government's level.

In March 1996, the free trade agreement that was made between two countries caused the volume of commerce to increase in a big scale according to the previous years. (Kramer,2001:196) The delay occurred at Turkey's full membership process to the EU accelerated the relations of the Turkish authorities with this state. The relations between two countries had reached to the top level by signing the Military Education Contract in February 1996. According to the contract, two countries will pay mutual military visits, will learn military techniques from each other and the Israeli and Turkish pilots will have common training in each others' countries. They would cooperate in advanced gun production with the rocket system from the land to the air and Turkey and Israel will cooperate on intelligence relations.

It is known as that Mossad, the secret service was effective on capturing the PKK leader, Abdullah Ocalan in 1999 and taking him to Turkey after being caught in Kenya. It can be said that the relations between Turkey and Israel got into a normalization process after the imprisonment of the PKK leader, Abdullah Ocalan in 1999. At this point it should be determined that Turkey's being accepted as a candidate country at the Helsinki Summit of the European Union was also effective on this.

In 2001, Israel under the governance of coalition government led by the Likud Party, the radical right wing leader Ariel Sharon has turned back to the foreign policy supporter of severness again. It has gone into surpassing policy to the II. Intifada started in 2000 in the territories under occupation and the Palestine leaders gave importance to the targeted killing policy. (Shlaim, 2001:600) Ankara reacted against this situation. In 2000, at the summit of ISEDAK (Permanent Council of Muslim Conference Economic Cooperation) President Seer had criticized the events in Palestine. (Kaya, 2010:1-2)

Hamas' political bureau chief Khaled Meshaal's visit to Turkey in January 2006, Israel's "Operation Cast Lead" launching against Gaza on 27 December 2008, prime minister Erdogan's crisis of One minute in the Economic Forum in Davos, the cancellation of Anatolia Eagle practice, the low-seat crisis and lastly Blue Marmara crisis put the relation between Israel and Turkey in a difficult period.

The Centre of Global Political Trends which spent efforts for normalization of relation between Israel and Turkey also discussed Palmer Report and voltage happened aftermath the publication of report by arranging a round-table meeting on 12 October 2001. Participants even though acted from the point of development of relations in two countries, agreed about holding compensation and apology demands and about the issue of embargo that is said to come under international judicial authority.

After Israel's apology, Foreign Minister Davutoğlu highlighted that "there is no connection with Syria about this issue" and even if he stated that "Turkey's policy with Syria is principal like the policy with Israel" it is useful to underline the importance of progress in the zone. In this regard, especially the progress occurs in Syria has a great importance.

With AKP's being the power in Turkey in 2002 the ongoing Turkey-Israel relations started to become severe. The AKP government started to implement multilateral policies especially in the Middle East. Its taking Hamas, whom Israel defines as a terrorist organization with the Palestine Independence Organization as the address against Israel was the one of the signs. In 2006, Turkey's visit of the Hamas leader was met with a reaction from Israel. In the last days of 2008 Israel has showed that it has not given up its violence policy with the operation that it started against Hamas in Gazze. Turkey continued its criticizing tradition of Israel's applying to unbalanced violence. The Netanyahu government which came into power in February 2009 continues the required preparations for the air attack which it aims to make towards the nuclear facilities of Iran. Ankara proposes this problem to be solved with political ways and it is thought that Ankara will censure a possible attack of Israel.

In 2008, Turkey was mediating between Israel and the Arabian countries. The parties used to come to Turkey and negotiate. In 2008, when it was expected that these negotiations will result the 2008-2009 Gazze conflict divulgated. By 2009, Israel bombed more than a thousand of Palestinian and they lost their lives. This situation negatively affected the relations between Turkey and Israel. During the World Economic Forum held in Davos, in 2009, Erdogan's living the meeting by criticizing Israel's policy in front of the whole world tensed up the relations between Turkey and Israel even more.

Opposing the traditional TFP, Turkey's multilateral and risk taking foreign policy understanding that it followed with the AKP government and will continue to increase Turkey's effectiveness on the balances on the

Middle East with Turkey's following policies based on more realistic and balanced relations on the Middle East, particularly Palestine.

The recent tension between Turkey and Israel cannot be explained by just paying attention to the post-Gaza War debates. Ankara's reaction to Israeli state is destructive and cruel for the resolution of its problems which has been a common feature of mutual relations. So it should be seen natural for Turkey to be critical of the Operation Cast Lead.

Turkey's new vision of foreign policy that has been in effect since the early 2000s and the political developments in the Middle East in the last decade expose the structural causes of the tension. Bilateral relations are entering into a new period with greater influence of Turkey in regional affairs.

Turkish- Israel (Turkey-Israel) relation completely added different dimension to Israel's troops attacked aid ships for a serious intervention, although they were in international waters in May 2010. With this incident Turkey has become direct and active intervener in Palestine- Israel war and Israel will be alone in the region hereafter and other Muslim countries will be more on the side of Turkey and Palestine. Turkey called in its ambassador from Israel and canceled agreement with Israel. In this new period, it is seen that the relations between Ankara and Tel-Aviv will continue to exist at a very lower level in future.

When Turkey started to support dissidents of Syria openly, particularly after August 2011, Israel continued to monitor the "progresses of Syria from "out of the pitch" for a long time. In this process, protection of stability for the country in Israel's policy with Syria was the most important issue.

Although, The Syrian crisis is in contrast to commitments of being an important opportunity for development of relations between Syria, Turkey and Israel as claimed by Washington, it will not be wrong to say that Syrian crisis is a crisis that faced two countries. While Syria, providing political and territorial unity, is important for Turkey, Syria with ethnic and denominational split is rather reassuring for Israel. Turkey's effort to come up with a solution soon and its steps for providing Syria's unity, show that Turkey doesn't want to take risk of losing the influence on a divided Syria.

In March 2013, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu finally apologized to Turkey and Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan accepted the apology. There were two important incidents happened in the Middle East in last two years. One of them is Arab uprisings and the other is the discovery of gas revenues in the Eastern Mediterranean. These important developments show that both countries need to fix their relationship for mutual interest. Meanwhile, after the increasing strong relations with Israel, Turkey would use the benefit of this relation as a deterrence effect to Iran.

Israel's trust in Turkey is increasing again and while Iran views Turkey's support of the Syria opposition as well as its rapprochement with

Israel suspiciously, Turkey still has comparatively good offices in Iran and could be an important part of an eventual solution to the conflict. (Huber, 2012)

5. IRAQ – TURKEY RELATIONS

Turkey's primary policy about Iraq has always been in the direction of the safety of territorial integrity of Iraq. With the Gulf Crisis and Turkey's Middle East policy, the mobility started in the period of 1980-88 which has made a new process and has reached itself to the Turkey- Iraq-USA equation in the TFP. It is possible to say that the first item on the agenda of policy that Turkey created against Middle East at that period, was the Kurdish problem and struggle against PKK.

The marking issue about relations with Iraq is undoubtedly the status of Northern Iraq and the existence of PKK in the region. During the period, Turkey wanted to prevent the foundation of a Kurdish state in Northern Iraq. Turkey, which provided an important support to the USA in the Gulf War, tried to issue the losses because of the embargo decision which was put into effect before the war.

Turkey started security centered foreign policies seriously, especially after the gulf crisis in 1990. In order to provide a new initiative for itself in the foreign policy, Turkey has taken an active role in the Gulf war. But Turkey couldn't find what it had expected in terms of political and economic benefit from the Gulf War, instead it has faced with a PKK becoming more and stronger and a Kurdish problem on the world agenda in the context of Northern Iraq. Turkey had serious financial loss because of the embargo implemented and it was not able to turn the operation to provide comfort and within this context its relations with the USA into a concrete acquisition. The commercial loss with the Middle East occurred after the Gulf War has also negatively affected Turkey's security. The economical results of the Gulf Crisis and the war have aggravated the Kurdish problem and the violence surrounding it.

Turkey has evaluated the Kurdish administration attempts to be a state which was tried to be founded in Northern Iraq in 1991 as a threat for its own safety and territorial integrity. During the 1991 Gulf war and the post war period USA's containment policy to Saddam Hussein has once more made Turkey a geostrategic important ally in private for the USA and in general for the western world. (Makovsky and Sayari, 2002:5)As a result, Turkey's gulf policy got stuck between it's strategically relations with the USA and USA's policies towards the Kurdish and Saddam. (Arı, 2004)

With May 1992 elections , Kurdish groups organized their own local authority and it caused Turkey to express concerns about this structure being a state and caused territorial integrity of Iraq to collapse. Following this development, Turkey, Iran and Syria held a triple meeting in Ankara and

have reiterated their sensitiveness towards the corruption of the territorial integrity of Iraq. (Bengio, 1995:83)

During the first gulf war Turkey followed a policy which did not foresee taking part in the war and being cautious as well as being active. The primary measure that President Özal had taken was closing the Kerkük Yumurtalık petroleum pipelines at the very beginning of the war.

In the 1992-93 periods there has been a notable increase at PKK attacks. (Altunışık, 2000:159) Iraq's split following the Gulf crisis and the foundation of an independent Kurdish state has created the red line for Turkey. Iraq's stability and the territorial integrity with the struggle with PKK have formed Turkey's Iraqi priorities.

On 29 July 1992, Mesut Barzani, the leader of KDP and Celal Talabani, the leader of KYB went to Washington and met with James Baker, the Secretary of State of the time. (Ari, 2004) The acceptance of the Kurdish leaders in high rank was a sign in view of Turkey that the regional policy of the USA was changing. Turkey was able to make a military operation against PKK when needed within the boundaries of Iraq in the period of 1991-2003 March. Turkey's cooperation providing with USA about struggle against PKK which Turkey sees as the most important security threat has brought Turkey to an important initiative and flexibility in terms of Middle East policy. With this support that Turkey gained help from USA to struggle with PKK, Turkey could have a wider vision in the policy of Middle East. Another important benefits of Turkey on Iraq policy is that the increasing tendencies for preserving the territorial integrity of Iraq.

As a result of withdrawal of US from Iraq, the relation between Iran and Iraq became strained in terms of dealing with regional domination. In response to rapprochement between Maliki and Iran, Turkey's stay besides dissension was evaluated in form of confrontation of Turkey with Iran via Iraq's internal policy just as in Syria. This encounter has shown not only benefits, policies and Iraqi partners of two countries, but also conflict of zone vision.

One of the Maliki's first lunges in foreign policy was criticism of intervention that Saudi Arabia did for suppression of the riots raised in Bahrain during Arab spring. However, after appearing of the Gulf Cooperation Council, Hashemi's crisis, He censured Maliki government in December 2011 meeting. Senior Arab Officials blamed Maliki for changing Iraq to a Shia country, thereby to a potential threat. (Alsis, Cordesman, Loi, and Mausner, 2001:31)

The development of relations between Turkey and Iraq Kurdistan Regional Government independent from Baghdad, especially agreements of energy collaboration between Turkey and Kurd Regional Government and negotiations with different Iraqi political leader caused Maliki government to react hardly against Turkey. While Turkish officials accuse Iraq government of being authoritarian and denomination, Maliki government blamed Turkey for interfering its domestic affairs. (Çağaptay, 2012)

Turkey and Erbil have become ready to sign agreement regarding to exporting Kurdish Region of Iraq's resources to Europe *via* Turkey, achieving Turkey's intensives of becoming a trans-regional energy hub. In the scope of Neçirvan Barzani's visit, petroleum valued at 16 billion dollars annual run out to Turkey, with the energy agreement that will be signed with North Iraq. The figure in natural gas that will come in 2015 is expressed to reach at 10 billion dollars. (The voice of Russia, 2013) The agreements signed between Ankara and Erbil on oil and gas are source of tension with both Iraq Center Administration and Iran as Baghdad claims that it is the only authority to be dealt with. With return of the region to normal, Turkey, due to gained policy, again aims to conclude a commercial agreement with zone countries.

6. IRAN-TURKEY RELATIONS

After the Iranian revolution, everyone who looked at the past of the relations between Turkey and Iran was surmising that the relations would alter for the worse. But, the relations didn't alter for the worse, on the contrary, much better course followed. However, the relations which into process of deterioration with the realization of 1980 coup d'état in Turkey got back on the rails with the outbreak of Iran –Iraq war. At this period Turkey as a result of his diplomacy of neutralism became one of the most important commercial partners of Iran.

Two activities at the beginning of 1990's affected the Turk- Iran relations on a great scale. One of them is the Gulf War. Turkey and Iran which did not have divided opinion during the war, presence of the USA forces (operation provide comfort) which settled on the borderland of Turkey for the safety of the Kurdish population who escaped from Saadam Hussein's intervention following the war bothered Iran. As for the other event, it was the disintegration of the Soviet Union. Again in this period, the other reason for the deterioration of the relations was the assassinations happened in Turkey and the assertions aimed at these assassinations which Iran has a hand in them. On 4 February 1993, İsmet Sezgin, then the minister of internal affairs stated that the persons who were arrested in connection with the assassination of Uğur Mumcu got training in Iran but Iran rejected this plea. (Ankara Radyosu, 1993) The relations improved relatively with these; Necmettin Erbakan's being the prime minister and paying his first visit to Iran, Rafsanjani's visit to Turkey, putting on the agenda of D-8, a cooperation project that comprises Muslim countries.

Although the increasing influence of Iran in the Middle East and its relations with the USA has come to a dimension that had the risk of a military conflict, the bilateral relations between Turkey and Iran an approach was experienced during the same period. Although Iran is an asymmetric potential threat also for Turkey with its nuclear technology program, Turkey wants any problem about Iran to be solved by diplomacy and wants Iran's right to have nuclear technology to be prevented. Turkey is remaining a

distance to the demands of cooperation and sanctions against Iran which will come and can come from the USA.

There appeared a convergence with Iran's war on PKK. On November 1993, Turkey and Iran signed Geneva protocol. According to this protocol, they do not let any member of terror organization to be active on their lands. With this agreement, Iran returned some PKK militants to Turkey on May 1994. By this way a convergence appeared between Turkey and Iran. As a part of this convergence, Süleyman Demirel visited Iran on June 1994 and this visit was first president visit after the revolution. (Olson, 2005:8)

Turkey follows a sensitive Iranian policy within the Middle East policy. Turkey again carries out a balance diplomacy based on good relations with Iran in the Middle East. With its no problem understanding and within its new foreign policy, Turkey continues its bilateral relations with Iran within this framework.

In February 2006, Turkish and Iranian security forces signed a memorandum of understanding to cooperate on counter-insurgency issues to promote further coordination and security measures against the PKK. (Murinson, 2006:958) Being against the foundation of a Kurdish state in Northern Iraq and a reconciliation about struggle against PKK- PJAK - The Party of Free Life of Kurdistan- that is the Iranian branch of the terrorist PKK is called as PJAK and cooperating on energy has affected the relations between Turkey and Iran in a positive way.

The economic potential between Iran and Turkey always exists. Even between the years 1992- 1998, these were the years that Turkey- Iran relations were problematic; the volume of trade was 908.000.000 USD. (Statistical year book of Turkey, 1998) Besides each year many Iranian citizens come to visit Turkey as tourists. Nowadays, there is a wide economic cooperation and a high volume of trade between Turkey and Iran.

Turkey carries an important diplomacy in the Middle East on its relations with Iran. Turkey took very prominent role for nuclear fuel swap agreement with Iran in May 2010. It certainly shows that Turkey's role in the region and world is increasing. Turkey wishes all the problems to be solved with dialogue and diplomacy and its point of view about this issue is being accepted and supported before the Middle East, Arabian and the Gulf countries. Turkey's main policy in this field is that Iran's not being balanced with an opposition and conflict, it is balancing Iran with dialogue and diplomacy. It was decided on the increase of the natural gas purchase, mutually increasing the investments and the volume of trade and developing the mutual relations about education and culture. It tried to develop relations with the other countries in the region in the same way.

Turkey is seeking to hedge against the possible emergence of a new nuclear armed state on its borders, including through participation in NATO's new missile defense architecture (also useful vis-à-vis Syria, of course). (Lesser, 2013:261) Iran's reasons of increasing influence over Iraq, after Turkey's decision to host NATO radars, caused Iran to make politics

that increase polarization in the region and regional polarization was sharpened. Because Iran wants to take a control over the region after USA has abundant from Iraq.

Notwithstanding Turkey's self-assurance, regional developments contain serious dangers. Turkey has had to implement an attentive balancing policy with Iran (as has Iran with Turkey). In one sense, the two countries are at odds with each other over Syria and directly compete in Iraq. On the contrary, the Iranians are strongly aware that they cannot afford to alienate Turkey, which has proven quite helpful on Iran's nuclear confrontation with the West. (Barkey, 2012)

Iran and Turkey have faced with Iraq after Syria, as a result of regional voltage and the reflection of this voltage in Iraq politics. This reception caused gradually deterioration of the relations of both Ankara-Baghdad and Ankara-Tehran. Beside Iran's support of Assad regime, its posture directed Bahrain as well; caused representing policies of Iran resisting on denominationalism and negative impression of Iran phenomenon in Arab society. So far as Iraq's governance force to its allies in Iraq and Lebanon to support Syrian regime with expedited procedures, fairly exposes this fact. (Bakeer, 2012)

7. CONCLUSION

The combination of multiple variables caused change of TFP in region. Since the cold war period, all of the developments in the Middle East have had an effect on Turkey's security either directly or indirectly. The dominance of peace and stability in the Middle East is very much important in terms of both the safety of the country and regional peace. Accordingly, while Turkey was giving big importance to maintain its relations within peace and friendship with the Arab and Islamic World because of its historical and religious similarities, it has to maintain the relations and the cooperations which will serve to provide the stability and the peace by means of taking into consideration Israel and the regional conditions.

It is inevitable for TFP to have a necessary update with concept of "national", "realist" and "pragmatic", by absolutely being subjected to a deep self-criticism. The theoretical part (discourse) and practical part (action) of Turkey's foreign policy must be parallel to each other. Because the structure of international area is frail, it causes quick changes for the circumstances. There should be an active policy of Turkey in the Middle East to look after its benefits and Turkey has to determine a policy for the idiosyncratic of each country, because each country has an idiosyncratic situation and specific characteristics of its own. Turkey has a facilitating role by featuring diplomacy for the solutions of the various problems faced in the Middle East. The bilateral relations to be established according to the particular policy with neighbors will contribute to Turkey's taking this role.

Turkey exhibited an attitude of taking place next to public and democracy regardless of country in Middle East during Arab spring and indicated that it supported movements of transformation in the region at every turn. The process of Arab spring in Turkish foreign policy had a very important role for forming a new vision by manifesting itself in much area; like principles of new Ottomanism; policy of zero problems with neighbors; normative popular leadership; and new opportunities aroused in the region. In the light of these developments, it is must to note that; objective data cannot be presented in terms of fleeting evaluations done for foreign policies, ideals and practices. The agreements made with North Iraq Regional Kurdish Government in 2013 are indicators of continuing of proactive foreign policy that implemented before 2010.

After the alteration of the region, any attempt by Turkey to create any kind of supremacy over the region is probable to complicate problems further without solving the crucial issues. Turkey also needs to establish new relations in order to balance its condition with other part of the world. Therefore Turkish-Western partnership is essential. This is a common benefit for both sides. Constituted powerful relations with Middle East will grant serious contributions to its allies.

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